

Your trash's weight? Expect a longer wait

Old scale house at trash station to come down Monday; new structure expected in October.

By Michael Polhamus

Users of the trash transfer station may spend more time there due to construction of a new scale house.

Work on the scale house, which currently holds one set of scales that will be replaced with two, commenced late last month and is expected to continue through October.

Workers are installing a temporary scale house in preparation for destruction of the existing structure. That's planned for Monday.

Replacement of the scale house is the first of several large projects at the trash transfer station, all of which are expected to be complete within five years.

The transfer station itself is due for replacement after the scale house. Both projects will be followed by excavation and re-capping of the old landfill the site is built on.

Once the scale house is replaced, "It should be easier, safer and faster for people to get through to offload" their trash, Teton County public information officer Charlotte Reynolds said.

Reynolds said, however, that "people may experience delays."

Those wishing to dump their trash at the transfer station now use the same set of scales to weigh their vehicles on the way in and out. The arrangement has in the past caused traffic congestion backing up to Highway 89 as incoming and outgoing traffic alternate on their way over the scale.

The new scale house will feature a pair of scales, so those driving into the transfer station can be weighed on one set, and those leaving will use another.

A temporary scale house will be erected so the station can continue to function once the existing scale house is torn down next week.

"The transfer station will remain open and operational throughout," Reynolds said.

"There will be disruptions" as a result of the work, Teton County Engineer Sean O'Malley said.

"It'll get worse before it gets better," he said, "but ultimately it should be quite a bit better."

The scale house project is the first of three phases of work at the trash transfer station.

The second phase will entail replacement of the transfer station itself, O'Malley said.

That phase is expected to begin next year, when workers will erect a transfer station building roughly the same size as, and adjacent to, the existing one, he said. The existing transfer station building will then be torn down and another structure mirroring the one just built will take its place.

The resulting structure will more than double the floor area available for sorting trash, “and should improve our ability to pull out recyclables and other items,” O’Malley said.

Concurrently with the last two phases, workers will excavate old trash buried beneath the site when it served as the county’s landfill through 1989. The excavated trash will be used to level the entire site, and everything within the old landfill’s boundaries will be capped to prevent water infiltration.

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality mandated recapping of the old landfill after tests showed it was leaking water contaminants.

Replacement of the scale house will cost around \$1.8 million. The larger effort to replace the transfer station building and to re-cap the landfill is expected to cost as much as \$20 million.

County citizens voted in 2012 to pay for \$14.5 million of that through a specific purpose excise tax. State funds are expected to cover most if not all of the rest. *Contact Michael Polhamus at 732-7076 or county@jhnewsandguide.com.*

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teton county engineer